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## NOTES ON THE LANGUAGE AND FOLK-USAGE OF THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY.<sup>1</sup>

(WITH ESPECIAL REGARD TO SURVIVALS OF ARABIC CUSTOM.)

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### INTRODUCTORY.

THE term "Rio Grande Valley," as employed in this paper, must be understood as applying to any part of the extreme southern or Mexican boundary of the United States; not alone the Brazos River, which for so many hundreds of leagues of its turbid course winds about amid the villages of a Mexican population, and is supposed by some legal fiction to divide the soil of the two great republics of North America, but also the Gila of Arizona, and such sections of Mexican territory itself which may from time to time have been visited by the writer.

The designation "Arabic" would be equally misleading were it

<sup>1</sup> Paper presented at the Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Folk-Lore Society, Philadelphia, Pa., December 28, 1895.

not understood at the outset that the so-called Arab domination in Spain was a commingling, and not always a peaceful or happy one, of Mahomedan sectaries from Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and the former Roman provinces of Mauritania and the Cyrenaica, in Northern Africa. For generations there does not seem to have been even a semblance of amalgamation. The polished Syrian from Damascus established himself in Cordova and Granada, revelling in the luxury afforded by vine and olive and pomegrante, while the rude Moslem Berber scowled upon the still ruder Christian in the mountains of the Asturias.

But between 1492, the year which witnessed the surrender of *El Zogoybi* and threw open the portals of the New World, and the year 1609 and 1610, which witnessed the eviction of the last armed body of Moriscos from the cliffs of the Alpucarras, it is not too much to suppose that the pressure of Christian power had brought about a more perfect fusion of the discordant elements formerly ruled by the Caliphate of the West, and from the new sons of the Church gathered up from all sections of Andalusia and Murcia and the Castiles, no doubt, many bold spirits went to seek rest and better fortune beyond the sea.

There having been no such thing as organized colonization in the primitive period of Mexican history, it would, of course, be a hopeless task at this late day to attempt to determine how great a percentage of Moorish blood was included in the Caucasian migration to New Spain, but there is reason to regard it as having been of considerable importance, either on account of self-imposed exile in the years following the surrender of Granada to Ferdinand and Isabella, or because of the gradual assimilation and intermarriage of Arab-Moors and Christians which had been quietly going on from the landing of Tarik el Tuerto in 710 or 711, and with accelerated force from the day of the Christian victory of Navas de Tolosa in 1212.

#### DRESS OF MEXICANS.

By inquiring what was the clothing of the Moorish working classes, and then comparing it with that now in use among the Mexicans, the exact amount of "survival" can at once be determined.

The adage that "the apparel doth oft proclaim the man" was as true of the Arab-Moor and of the Mexican as of the Dane or the Angle. "For the common people (males) the ordinary dress was a gown or long sack, gathered with a belt at the waist; beneath were loose drawers gathered at the ankle, and the overdress was a large-sleeved mantle, open in front. For the street or the field, sandals were usually worn; but these were replaced in the house by heelless slippers such as are still found in the bazaars of Tangiers and Morocco. . . .

For the people at large, no long time elapsed before the turban fell into disuse in Spain." (Coppée, "Hist. of the Conq. of Spain by the Arab-Moors," vol. ii. p. 313, Boston, 1881.)

We know that the dress of the Aztecs in Mexico — that is of the common people — consisted in sandals, loin-cloth, and a loose cotton mantle; in winter, perhaps, they had a rabbit-skin mantelet or cloak, the same as that until lately worn by Moquis, Zuñis, Hualpais, Utes, and even Navajoes and Apaches. The Spaniards compelled the natives to wear "clothing." (See "Laws of Spain in their Application to the American Indians," Bourke, in "American Anthropologist," 1893, quoting law of Emperor Charles V., A. D. 1551, No. 22, from the "Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias," Madrid, 1681.) This clothing to-day consists of *guarachis*, or *alpargatas* for the feet, *calzoncillos*, or loose drawers which are frequently tied at ankle, a long white cotton shirt, *camisa*, worn outside the drawers, and corresponding to the "gown or long sack" of Coppée; this is gathered by a *faja* or sash, generally of red cotton.<sup>1</sup> The *serape*, a bright-colored blanket, covers the shoulders. The *sombrero* for the head seems to be a Spanish modification of a high, conical, broad-brimmed straw hat worn by Tlascatlacs, Tarascos, and Otomies; but, on ceremonial occasions, the young bucks appear in a *chaqueton*, which is adorned with everything in the way of buttons, frogging, and cheap lace that money can buy, and closely corresponds to the "large-sleeved mantle."

The *sombrero* is banded with a coiled rattlesnake in gold or silver galloon, a survival, no doubt, from the real rattlesnake skin which encircled the covering of more primitive times.

In the outlying cities of Mexico, such as Morelia, Patzcuaro, or Monclova, elderly gentlemen of good social position still adhere to the flowing *capa* or cloak, and, at rarer intervals, don a silver-handled sword. This *capa* is generally believed to be the offspring of the Roman toga, but, according to Coppée (ii. 312), "the famous Spanish *capa* or cloak of the present day owes its origin to no single people." The word for waistcoat (*chaleco*) might be mentioned, but the garment is not much used.

So much for the dress of the men. The Arab women in Spain "wore two long robes, an inner and an outer one, the former only confined at the waist; the inner, close-fitting, with sleeves, and the outer, a *saya* or mantle; they had, besides, full drawers and heelless

<sup>1</sup> There are some reasons for believing that both shirts and drawers were introduced into Europe by the Arabs. Coppée's statement in regard to the disuse of the turban is in apparent conflict with Eguilaz y Yanguas' *Glosario*, art. "Almazal" and "Albengala," but the discordance may have arisen from a difference in dates.

slippers. These robes were frequently striped and embroidered with gold and silver. The long, oblong shawl, or outer veil, called *izar*, a covering for concealment, now known and generally used in Spain as the mantilla, was probably adopted from the Goths and Hispano-Romans." (Coppée, *op. cit.* ii. 315.) In America we have the *enaguas*, or petticoats (also called *chupa*, French *jupon*, an Arabic word), *chardas* or slippers, and the *reboso* of Mexico, together with the *chala*, or shawl. The robes, which "were frequently striped and embroidered with gold and silver," find their counterpart in the beautiful and expensive blankets of silk interwoven with gold thread for which the lovely city of Saltillo, Mexico, was once famous.

But a distinctively Arabic origin cannot be claimed for them. They may have come from Damascus, or may have been manufactured in the Iberian peninsula during the time of Roman or Carthaginian supremacy.

Gibbon indeed states that Roderic the Goth, at the battle of the Guadalete, was "incumbered with a flowing robe of gold and silken embroidery" ("Dec. and Fall," cap. 51), and Condé speaks of "gorgeous tissues, the least valuable being textures of silk and gold," sent as presents to the king of Castile by Jusef, king of Granada, A. D. 1402. ("Domination of Arabs in Spain," vol. iii. p. 304.) The same kind of precious fabrics will be found referred to on pages 313, 330, 334, and 376; and under the name of *alguexí*, such fabrics were mentioned in a *charta* of King Ferdinand, anno 1101, according to Eguilaz y Yanguas, "Glosario." And Rockhill speaks of *tirmas*, or garments made of gold and silken threads interwoven as in use to-day in China, Thibet, and North India. (W. W. Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," p. 282, New York, 1891.)

Among Mahomedans of the present day, the *reboso* has been superseded or supplemented by the *yashmak*; in Spain the women were allowed more freedom and were not always required to be veiled. "The king's sister, Soura, was riding in the streets without a veil, a common and not improper practice in the West." (Coppée, ii. 231.)

There is an apparent antagonism between Coppée's statement that the Arabs in Spain soon discontinued the use of the turban (as above repeated), and the remarks given by Stirling-Maxwell, who tells us that in 1518 the Moriscoes were commanded to "speak Castilian and dress like Spaniards," and that "in the name of the crazy Queen Juana a decree was issued requiring the Moriscoes to lay aside the robes and turbans of their ancient race and assume the hated hats and breeches of their oppressors." ("Life of Don John of Austria," vol. i. pp. 118, 119, London, 1873.)

It is quite likely that many of the Moriscoes, in the enthusiasm of

their final struggle with the Roman-Goth, may have readopted the turban as a conspicuous and serviceable headdress.

Umbrellas and parasols are very rarely seen among Mexicans; their origin is distinctly Asiatic. When Mahomed entered Medina, at end of the Hegira, "an umbrella shaded his head." (Gibbon, "Decl. and Fall," cap. 50.) But, on the other hand, that dangerous weapon, the Spanish fan, may be ascribed to the Romans, in whose religious ceremonials two fans, made of white peacock feathers, were borne before the Pontifex Maximus. They are said still to figure in some of the more elaborate functions of the Vatican.

It is only necessary to add that the word *sombrero* is of Latin origin, and equivalent to "shader," a *prima facie* proof that the Spaniards derived head-gear from the Romans; while the origin of the word corresponding to "shoe," *zapato*, is doubtful, the reputation of the Moslem for skill in all that relates to leather goods is perpetuated in the name "cordwainer" (from "cordovan," leather made in Cordova).

The clothing of the smaller Mexican children in the Rio Grande valley will not occupy much of our space; nearly all of them dress à l'*Aztecque*, which does not mean much of a toilette.

#### JEWELRY.

No paper treating even superficially of the apparel of women can afford to ignore the jewels and other adornment in which they so greatly delight.

The "filagree" or "filagrana" work in silver and gold of the Mexican *plateros* was one of the features of border life which first attracted the attention of Americans and others who some twenty-five or thirty years ago had ventured out to the then remote cities of Santa Fé, Albuquerque, San Antonio, Los Angeles, or Tucson. It has since become too well known to need description. Its derivation is undoubtedly Arab-Moorish.

"The Arab-Moors were also very skilful in the fabrics of the jeweller and the goldsmith, the art of which they brought from Damascus, and to-day shops, differing very slightly from those of the Moorish period, may be seen in that city, where various and delicate patterns of filagree-work in gold and silver attract a populace very fond of rather glaring ornaments." (Coppée, vol. ii, p. 400.) "Among the *joyas*, brilliant earrings and curiously wrought necklaces always find a prominent place" (*loc. cit.*), just as they do on the Mexican frontier to-day. *Salajas* mean jewelry of all kinds; *prendedor*, a breast-pin: *sortijas*, earrings.

Not only the filagree jewelry, but the dainty, filmy *deshilada*, or drawn work, may claim an Arabic origin, and this in face of the fact that the word itself is a Latin compound meaning "unthreaded."

In the privacy of the Arab-Moor seraglio this dainty art may have been fostered, to receive its highest development afterwards in the seclusion of the Christian cloister. The names of the different patterns are in several cases Christian and in no case Mahomedan. Thus, we have the crown of Christ (*corona de Cristo*), the cross (*la cruz*), the cross with stars (*la cruz con estrellas*), the rain of gold (*la lluvia de oro*) the wheel (*la rueda*), make me if you can (*hazme si puedes*) the footprint of the water-carrier (*el tacon del barrilero*), and very many others.

#### HOUSES, ARCHITECTURE, ETC.<sup>1</sup>

Mexican houses have been so often described that it is not worth while to say much about them. In one word, they are generally of one story, offering to the street either no opening at all, or else a series of high, narrow windows, heavily guarded by *rejas* or grills made of rods of wrought iron disposed vertically. These long, narrow windows betray a people accustomed for generations to intense heat and anxious so to arrange their habitations that the smallest possible amount of solar rays may enter.

All rooms open out upon an inner court, or *patio*, which is very generally filled with flowers, vines, and palms; in the centre will be found an *aljibe*, or cistern (Arabic word). Entrance from the street is through a high-arched and stone-paved porte-cochère, called the *saguan* (Arabic word). The rooms to right and left of the *saguan* are devoted to household administration, reception of guests, and such purposes—the flanking rooms are sleeping-apartments; in the rear line are the kitchen, store-rooms, and servants' rooms. Back of the kitchen comes the *corral*, with sheds for horses, cows, burros, and sometimes with a blacksmith's forge. *Postigo* is the name of the little sliding door which admits of a look-out from the heavily-barred gate that closes the *saguan*.

In the mansions of the wealthy living in cities, or on the large haciendas, two stories are introduced, the upper surrounded on the inner side by a corridor open to the side of the *patio* and supported upon pillars. In these large houses, and in the old monasteries one comes across *miradores* (observation-places on the flat roofs), and *azoteas*, or terraces, which are Arabic and not Gothic in origin. The material of construction is stone, very rarely brick, and more generally adobe and *cajon*, the last-named being practically a large adobe. The name for an ordinary burned brick is *ladrillo*; *tapia* means rubble masonry.

<sup>1</sup> The description of a Spanish-Arab house given by Henry Coppée, *History of the Conquest of Spain by the Arab-Moors*, vol. ii. pp. 307, 308, in most of its features applies to the greater portion of the better class of houses in Mexico to-day.

Both the outside and inside walls of houses are most frequently stuccoed in bright colors and pleasing patterns.

Roofs are of tile, of thatch, sometimes of shingles and sometimes of earth covered over with a coating of plaster. In the material of construction, in the roofing and stuccoing, no less than in the ground-plan, most of these abodes could replace those described in books upon Arabia and Morocco.

When they can obtain these easily, Mexicans are as lavish in the use of whitewash and plaster as were the Arab-Moors of Spain.

In Cadiz (a Spanish city tracing back to the early centuries of Phœnician and Carthaginian occupancy) it is related that whitewash is kept in constant readiness in every household.

One of the grandest creations of Moorish architectural genius,—the Alhambra,—is a monument in stucco.

The churches of Mexico follow after the model of those in Spain, which, as has been shown, was not much interfered with during the centuries of Arab-Moorish contact. Nevertheless, the little half-orange (*medio-naranja*) domes of the Moors are to be seen in some of the beautiful mission churches like that of San Xavier del Bac, near Tucson, Arizona, and the *artesonado*, or bread-tray roof, is not unknown, but the beautiful, convoluted, double horseshoe arch or *ajimez* never was adopted.

The canopy used in religious processions is still called by the term *baldachin* (baldachino, stuff made in Bagdad).

It may be of interest to know that Moorish convicts were employed in the construction of the castle of San Juan de Allosa, in the harbor of Vera Cruz, Mexico.

#### FURNITURE.

Among the poorest class of Mexicans, those who live in squalid huts of thatch, with floors of earth, the custom obtains of sleeping on the floor while wearing the clothes of the day.

This custom is not peculiar to any one nation. It was known to the Aztec; it obtains among the Apache and was not unknown to Goth and Arab. "Spaniards of more than one rank sleep in their clothes," says C. Bogue Luffmann, in "A Vagabond in Spain," p. 257. (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895.)

Condé says, "Les Espagnols vivent comme des bêtes sauvages, entrant les uns chez les autres sans demander permission, et ne lavent ni leurs corps ni leurs habits, qu'ils n'ôtent que lorsqu'ils tombent en lambeaux." (Viardot, "Essais," vol. i. pp. 191-192, quoted by Burke, "History of Spain," vol. i. p. 158 footnote.)

"I have been told that many Portuguese peasants dislike the inconvenience of undressing at night, so that no time is lost in mak-



ing a toilet in the morning. My informant further stated that night and day for weeks many wear the same garments, trusting to showers to cleanse and sun to bleach their scanty garb." (Letter signed "Professor," in "Citizen," Brooklyn, N. Y., November 25, 1895.) "El acostarse en el suelo es comun entre los Celtos y los Españoles." (Padre Florez, "España Sagrada," vol. xv. p. 30.)

"An Oriental, going to sleep, merely spreads a mat and adjusts his clothes in a certain position and lays himself down." ("Encyc. of Geog." Philadelphia, 1845, vol. ii. p. 227, article "Asia.")

"The Tibetans are dirty. They wash once a year, and, except for festivals, never change their clothes till they begin to drop off." (Isabella Bird Bishop, "Among the Tibetans," p. 45, New York, 1875.)

#### MEALS.

The different meals of the Mexicans are the early breakfast or *desayuno*, now made of bread and coffee or chocolate, and two other meals bearing Latin names, and apparently of Latin origin, the *comida* or dinner, and the *cena* or supper. But to these have been added the full breakfast or *almuerzo*, and the evening collation or *merienda*.

The Mexican manner of eating, in which all those at table dip their hands into a common dish, is still to be noted in the small villages off the lines of railroad.

It was commented upon at length in a previous article ("Folk-Foods of the Rio Grande," in *Journal of American Folk-Lore*), in which it was shown that the same custom must have been followed by our Saviour.

It has been transmitted down to the Mahdi, so conservative are the tribes of the East of all ancient usages. Father Bonomi, a bold priest, who very recently made his escape from the Soudan, says: "Sometimes we dined at the Mahdi's table, which was very scanty. A dish contained a curious mixture from which each took with his fingers the portions he liked." (Reported in "Times," New York, September 7, 1895.)

In Madame Calderon de la Barca's day this custom was almost general in Mexico. "All common servants in Mexico and all common people eat with their fingers." ("Life in Mexico," p. 392, London, 1843.)

Describing his dinner with a lawyer and his family at Andujar, in Spain, C. Bogue Luffmann says: "There was no tablecloth, no napkins, no plates, no knives, forks, or spoons. We ate from one dish." ("A Vagabond in Spain.")

And Richard Ford, the great authority, says that in Spain "chairs are a luxury; the lower classes sit on the ground as in the East, or on

low stools, and fall to in a most Oriental manner, with an un-European ignorance of forks, for which they substitute a short wooden or horn spoon, or dip their bread into the dish, or fish up morsels with their long pointed knives. . . . Forks are an Italian invention . . . introduced into Somersetshire about 1690." ("Gatherings in Spain," p. 181, London, 1846.)

FOODS.

An examination of Mexican foods cannot fail to be of interest and importance, no matter from what point of view it may be made.

Leaving out of consideration those which, like chocolate, are of distinctly American lineage, it will be found that the Roman Goth has left a very large heritage of food to his American descendants, but that the Arab-Moorish sire has also been generous.

Thus coffee, *café*, comes from the Arab-Moor, and is still served in the coffee districts of Mexico as an *extracto*, precisely as it is served and has been served, by the Moors for centuries. *Azúcar* (sugar)<sup>1</sup> is not only Arabic itself, but many things connected with its manufacture suggest the same derivation. Connected terms are: *trapiche*, a sugar-mill; *chancaca*, crude brown sugar; *bagaza*, bagasse; *cande*, candy; *pelonce*, *peloncillo*, sugar in the loaf, and *almíbar*, the generic name for preserves of all kinds.

But, with the exception of course of the national beverages, *pulque* and *mescal*, it is in his drinks rather than in his solid foods that the Mexican shows how much he has taken from the customs of the Moslem.

*Aloque*, red wine, *jarabe*, syrup (from Arabic *scharâb*, a sweet drink), *elixir*, *sorbete*, sherbet, and *orchata*, orgeat, are words constantly to be heard from the smallest pueblo at the source of the Rio Grande to the smallest on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.<sup>2</sup>

FLOWERS, FRUITS, TREES, ETC.<sup>3</sup>

Entering the *patio* of a well-kept Mexican home, one cannot restrain a feeling of surprise at the many evidences of transplantation.

<sup>1</sup> In Mexico "the first sugar-canes were planted in 1520 by Don Pedro Alienza." Cortés "left sugar plantations near Cuyoacan in the Valley of Mexico." Madame Calderon de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, p. 244, London, 1843.

<sup>2</sup> The Mexican custom of selling all kinds of cooked food on little tables in the market-places is distinctively Arabic. "En los socos que los Arabes de España tenían en sus poblaciones, se vendia toda suerte de manjares y aun comidas aderezadas." Eguilaz y Yanguas, *Glosario*, p. 39, under "Açouque."

<sup>3</sup> From the very earliest days of Spanish domination, Mexico became a garden of all the fruits and flowers mentioned in this paper, while she in return favored the Europeans with her own delicious pineapple. Roses, jasmynes, and others of Flora's choicest treasures, bloomed in the gardens of every Franciscan monastery.

Here is the castor-oil plant, a wanderer from Northern Africa and the Nile valley. Next to it, the stately red-flowered oleander; the rose, the queen of the garden; the date, the solace of the great Abdu-r-rahman; the *jazmín*, of delicate odor; the pomegranate, which did *not* give its name to Granada; the apricot, *albericoque*, and peach, *durazno*, known to the Romans as the Persicus or Persian fruit; occasionally the almond, *almendra*, and at all times the orange, *naranja*, with its redolent flower, *azahar*; the lemon, *limón*; the shaddock, *toronja*; the olive, *aceituno*; the quince, *membrillo*; the apple, *manzana*; the succulent watermelon, *sandia*; rice, *arroz*; the poppy, *amápola*; the musk-flower, *almizcle*; tulip, *tulipán*; barley, *cebada*; bran, *salvado*; shorts, *asemilla*, from Arabic *acemita*; saffron, *azafran*; anemone; verbena; cork, *corcho*; ebony, *ébano*; lily, *azucena*; cotton, *algodón*; hemp, *cañamo*; myrtle, *arrayán*; acorn, *bellota*; oak, *roble*; juniper, *sabina*; poplar, *álamo*; luzerne grass, *alfalfa*; grass, *sacate*; forage, *forraje*; prickly pear, *tuna*; bamboo, *bambú*. Grapes grow wild in all parts of our own Southwest, and in every section of the great Mexican republic, yet the Spaniards introduced new varieties. The celebrated mission grape of California was introduced by Franciscan monks from Malaga. (Madame Calderon de la Barca, "Life in Mexico," p. 174.)

The name for fig is *higo*, Latin *figus*; this would seem to show that the Roman-Goths had this fruit before the Arab-Moors overwhelmed them; and the suspicion is aroused that they must have had many others; indeed, Eguilaz y Yanguas says that the Arab word *coti* meant "fig of the Goths." There is no lack of historical authority to support the suspicions aroused by philology. It should be remembered that Spain, as far back as the days of Solomon, was, at least along its seacoast, a province of the first importance in the eyes of Phœnicians, Carthaginians, and Romans. Its cities were hives of industry and marts of trade. Its wool, its cloth, its oil, wine, flour, and minerals of all kinds were famous. Its people were luxurious, refined, and scholarly. If dancing-girls from Cadiz clicked their castanets in the theatres of voluptuous Capua, the Roman Bishop of Cordova—Hosius, the friend of Constantine—was one of the guiding spirits at the Council of Nice.

Spain furnished the first foreign emperor, Trajan, to Rome, and the first foreign consul, Balbutius. Her citizens were the first, outside of Italy, to have Roman citizenship generally accorded them. The list of orators, poets, and philosophers furnished by Spain to

Francis Parkman, in his *Life of Champlain*, gives to that great Frenchman the credit of planting the first European roses in North America in his garden at Quebec, Canada (circa A. D. 1609). But Parkman's works do not apply to Mexico or the Mexican border.

Rome is long and distinguished. All this glory, all this luxury faded under the continuous raiding of Alan, Sueve, Vandal, and Goth. When the Vandals left for Africa they were charged with a ruthless destruction and extirpation of gardens and vineyards. All these facts should be present in mind in reading that the Arab-Moors introduced certain fruits and flowers into Spain; what they did, no doubt, was to *restock* the country.

Coppée (i. 158) says that the peach, pomegranate, and date-palm were introduced into Spain by Abdu-r-rhaman I. about 767-770 A. D. "The pomegranate was introduced by a specimen brought from Damascus." (Stanley Lane-Poole, p. 132.) The same king "himself planted a palm-tree, which was at that time a new thing in Spain — this being the first and only one in all the land." (Condé, "Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. i. p. 182. See, also, Stanley Lane-Poole, "Arabs in Spain," p. 132.) He adds: "He sent agents all over the world to bring him the rarest exotics," which speedily spread from the palace all over the land. "Dates of very rare kinds . . . transported into Spain by Zeiria ben Atia," A. p. 987. (Condé, vol. ii. p. 21.) Another Abdu-r-rhaman (third of the name) planted orange-groves at Cordova, in A. D. 957, although we are not told that these were the first. (Condé, vol. i. p. 443.) In another place Condé mentions "orange-trees and jasmines" in Cordova in 987. (Condé, vol. ii. p. 13.)

From what may be read in Théophile Gautier, "Wanderings in Spain," Harrison, "Spain in Profile," Fincke, "Spain and Morocco," and others, the oleander must have come to the Rio Grande Valley from Spain and Morocco.

The Mexicans of to-day are very fond of preserves, dried fruits of all kinds, and various confections for the preparation of which the Carmelite nuns were famous. There is reason to believe that this dexterity came down from the Arabs of Spain. "The conserves and fruits of all kinds" served to King Almansor in Murcia, in A. D. 984, "were matters of marvel," so Condé tells us, vol. ii. p. 5, and again, he speaks of "a thousand loads of dried fruits of different kinds" (A. D. 987). (Condé, "Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. ii. p. 17.)

It would take up too much space to go into the nomenclature of garden vegetables; few, if any, of those known to the Moors of Spain were unknown to the Romans. With the exception of potatoes, one of the most important gifts of the New World, and the scarcely less important tomato of the Aztecs, and maize, nearly every vegetable in the Mexican gardens bears a Latin name, — onions, garlic, cabbage, peas, beans, lettuce, turnips, mushrooms, celery. The palatable *frijole*, which forms the *plato nacional* of the republic, is a Mexican product. Only three plants are involved in doubt:

the *zanahoria* or carrot, which would seem to be Arabic, the *acelga* or beet, and the *garbanzo* or *chicharron*, a species of pea, said to be the *cicer* of the Romans.

The *buñuelo*, or fritter, made by the Mexican woman at Christmas, has been derived from Spain. Its resemblance to the *crispillac* of the Normans has been elsewhere noted.<sup>1</sup> Doughnuts fried in sweet oil, which are the same as the *buñuelos*, are much used in Spain at Corpus Christi, according to John Hay in "Castilian Days," p. 107, Boston, Osgood, 1871.

The Mexican fondness for iced cream and ices of all kinds, when they can be had, is Oriental. A deadly compound called *amantequillado*, and which has been fully described in "Folk-Foods of the Rio Grande," is largely composed of frozen butter, cinnamon, and nutmeg. It is to be hoped that the responsibility for its paternity rests upon the Mahomedan Moor and not upon the Christian Goth. It is still to be found in Spain. Théophile Gautier found such "ices" made either of cream, milk, butter, or cheese, during his "Wanderings in Spain" (pp. 31, 32, London, 1853). Harrison also describes them in his "Spain in Profile."

So, too, let us trust that the responsibility for the horny, indigestible goat's cheese of Mexico may be shifted from Christian shoulders. Its name, *queso*, controverts the assumption that it is of Arabic origin, and it is made from the milk of the *cabrita*, or she-goat, which bears a Latin name; nevertheless, further investigation may show that its present mode of manufacture is Arabic or Moorish.

#### PACK-TRAINS.

Nearly all domestic animals in Mexico bear Latin names. This would show that before the Arab invasion the Roman Goths possessed all these.

When we come to the names used in herds of horses and pack-mules the case changes at once. The Arabs were a nation of cavalry and mule or camel packers, and the language of to-day retains indications of the fact. So most of the names for the colors of horses are Arabic.

In regard to pack-trains, one of the most interesting cases of transplantation confronts us. Not only are all, or very nearly all the words in the packer's vocabulary Arabic, but the whole organization is Andalusian.

To begin with the superintendent of the pack-train; it is true that he bears the Roman title of *patron*, and his first assistant the equally Roman one of the *cargador*; but the pack-train itself is an *atajo*,

<sup>1</sup> "Medicine Men of the Apache," Burke, in vol. ix. *Annual Report*, Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian, Washington, D. C.

the bell is *cencerro*, the bell-mare *acémila*, the individual pack-mules are *machos*; when mules are used outside of a pack-train they go by the Latin name of *mulo*. The pack-saddle is *aparejo*, sometimes *albarda*; the pack-cover is *sobre-en-jalma*, in which *jalma* is Arabic; the packer himself is *arriero*, from the Arabic *arré*, go 'long, addressed to his mules; the eye-blind is *tañojo*; the canteen is *guaje*; the saddle-bags, *alforjas*; currycomb, *almohaza*.

Pack-trains grew up from the necessities of the case. Spain is a country of elevated mountain-ranges in which the still unconquered Christians had taken refuge. To pursue them, pack animals of some kind were necessary for transportation purposes. Mules being sure-footed, alert, comparatively small, and therefore better suited for work in narrow, winding defiles, and being also able to move about on rocky trails and in the cold climate of the plateaux of Estremadura, the Castilles, and the Asturias, were naturally chosen in place of elephants or camels.

No Spanish treatise upon the art of packing, or the management of pack-trains, can be found in the catalogues of the Ticknor or Marsh collections or the library of Congress. Three have been published in the United States, all based upon the work of Mr. Thomas Moore, chief of transportation for General Crook during his Indian campaigns in Arizona, Wyoming, and Montana, and instructed in his business by expert Mexican and Chilian packers on the Pacific coast.

Pack-trains will, however, be found mentioned from the earliest days of the Arab invasion of Spain. When Tarik's army was advancing through Spain, "rations for immediate use were carried upon mules, the *arrieros* or drivers of which were chosen from the number of those least capable of bearing arms." (Coppée, "History of the Conquest of Spain by the Arab-Moors," vol. i. p. 333.)

"Many sumpter mules laden with bales of delicate cloth" are mentioned by Condé under date of A. D. 987 (vol. ii. p. 17). "Baggage mules to carry off the spoils" were supplied by the discomfited Christians to Almanzor (circa A. D. 1000). (Stanley Lane-Poole, "Moors in Spain," p. 166, New York.) "The tents and pavilions were packed on mules and camels, as were also certain parts of the provisions," by the army of the Arab King Abdelmemumen ben Ali (A. D. 1158). (Condé, vol. ii. p. 487.) And so it goes; in every war in Spain the pack-mule and the pack-train are prominently mentioned. When Queen Isabella established the city of Santa Fé in the Vega of Granada (A. D. 1491-1492), her army was kept supplied by a train of no less than fifteen thousand pack-mules,

At a somewhat later date, when Don John of Austria prosecuted his campaign against the revolted Moors in the Alpuxarras, A. D.

1569-1570, one of his divisions, that of Manuel, had no less than "fourteen hundred pack-mules." (Stirling-Maxwell, "Life of Don John of Austria," vol. i. p. 221, London, 1873.) In the same campaign he also refers to "fifteen hundred sumpter mules." (*Idem*, p. 276.)

It is pretty evident from the evidence of history that the Goths had no pack-trains, although they had the animals required of them by the Moors. The Goths were a slow-moving people with wagons. Their king, Roderic, at the battle of the Guadalete, rode in a car of ivory, drawn by two white oxen.

There are pack-trains in Spain at the present hour, but the best belong to the Maragatos of Galicia, who are reputed to be of Moorish blood. (See Ford's "Hand-Book of Spain," "Maragatos.")

A recent and trustworthy authority speaks of pack-trains in remote Thibet. "I saw one caravan leave for Shi-gat-za, in which were over 3,000 pack-animals, mostly mules." (W. W. Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," p. 284, New York, 1891.)

The great value of pack-trains in military operations against the Apaches and other savage tribes in the Rocky Mountain region west of the Missouri has been recognized in "On the Border with Crook;" but were all notes and memoranda on the subject to be presented they would make a volume of themselves.

Even in personal characteristic, the Mexican *arriero* is identical with his Hispano-Moresque prototype. Like him he indulges in simple ballads and songs of love, drawled out in a heart-rending nasalized prolongation.

"The Spanish muleteer has an inexhaustible stock of songs and ballads with which to beguile his incessant wayfaring. His airs are rude and simple, consisting of but few inflections. . . . These he chants forth with a loud voice and long, drawling cadence. . . . This talent of singing and improvising is frequent in Spain, and is said to have been inherited from the Moors." Washington Irving, "Alhambra," pp. 16, 17, New York, 1865.<sup>1</sup> Something might be said about the cooking in pack-trains a quarter of a century ago presenting quaint and highly spiced dishes, but only one reference can now be made to such matters. The packers habitually employed *sour dough as a leaven*. This method, described in a little pamphlet the manuscript for which was submitted to and published by Brigadier-General John P. Hawkins, lately Commissary-General U. S. Army,

<sup>1</sup> As illustrative of the tenacity of life shown by the ballads of a people, read what is said by Mr. Alfred M. Williams about American sea-ballads: "They are likely to be lost with the chants of the Phœnician sailors, or the rowers of the galley of Ulysses, which they succeeded and some of whose melody they have perhaps reproduced." *Studies in Folk-Lore and Popular Poetry*, p. 10, Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1894.

is Spanish, perhaps Moorish, in origin. It is noted by only one author, C. Bogue Luffmann, as seen by him in Spain. ("A Vagabond in Spain," p. 237, New York, Scribners, 1895.)

#### BULL-FIGHTS.

Beyond a mere statement of the fact that the bull-fight is a well-established form of public entertainment in the cities of Mexico nearest to the valley of the Rio Grande, and that it adheres with fidelity to the model set in old Spain, nothing will be said in this paper. The subject is too vast. Contrary to the opinion maintained by most writers, that the bull-fight was of Arabic origin, there are grounds for believing that it was a Roman institution, taking on life in the days of imperial decadence, eagerly adopted and to a considerable extent modified by the Moslems of Andalusia.<sup>1</sup>

Should opportunity present, these views, with the authorities for and against them, will be elaborated in another article.

#### STREETS, LAMPS, WATCHMEN, BATHS.

From the house to the street is the most natural order of progression in treating of a people, their homes, manners, and customs. The streets of Mexican towns present strong resemblances to those of Arabic Spain and Morocco in being narrow and hemmed in by houses with *zaguanes*, iron-railed windows, projecting balconies, and walled *patios*. There is no general rule as regards paving, some streets in the town being *empedrados* (cobble-stoned), some paved with the Arabic *guijas*, or gravel, others unpaved; in some there is a gutter in the middle, in others there are gutters on each side. Generally there are very narrow footways on one or both sides; their presence cannot always be depended upon. Where muddy seasons are to be expected, as in Pazcuaro, near the Hotel Ybarra, a line of elevated foot-stones runs down the centre. If the promenade be made by night, one meets at every second or third corner the *sereno*, or watchman, who derives his name from the cry he was wont to give until very recently of *sere-e-n-o-o-o* (clear weather). He is a son

<sup>1</sup> There is another side to the story: "Bull-fights appear to have been a favorite amusement from the earliest time in the Spanish peninsula. It is evident that this custom existed before the Romans entered Spain, for it is represented upon ancient medals of a period earlier than their arrival." Edward Everett Hale and Susan Hale, *The Story of Spain*, p. 8, New York, Putnams, 1886.

Padre Francisco Florez, in his great work, *España Sagrada* (Madrid, 1750), tomo xix. p. 75 *et seq.*, mentions a Gothic Bishop Ataulpho, accused of crime, ordered by King Ordoño I. to fight a wild bull in the arena of Compostella in Galicia, Spain, circa A. D. 851 — "que el Obispo fuese echado á las fieras, esto es, que, poniendole en sitio público, le arrojasen un toro de los mas feroces que fuese el verdugo de tal culpa."



of Islam on the wrong side of the Atlantic. The Arab emirs had watchmen in all their villages. They are directly mentioned in Granada as early as A. D. 1343. (Condé, vol. iii. p. 267.) London and Paris did not have any at that date.<sup>1</sup>

Coppée states that under Arab rule in Spain watchmen with lanterns patrolled the cities at night, calling from hour to hour, *Allah il Allah*. ("Conq. Spain by the Arab-Moors," vol. ii. p. 326.) These cries were naturally superseded in Spain and her colonies by *Ave Maria Purísima*, which in its turn gave way to the shrill drone of the reed whistle to be heard in our day.

The electric light is playing havoc with much of the poetry of Mexican evening life, in which the old-time oil-lamp, suspended from wires crossing diagonally from corner to corner, was a conspicuous feature.

For this, also, Mexico was indebted to the Moors. The streets of Arabic Cordova "might be traversed at night by the light of lamps placed close to each other." (Coppée, vol. ii. p. 306.) This was about A. D. 1100, when neither London nor Paris were lighted. No systematic attempt was made to light the city of London until after the plague and the great fire, and even until the days of the French Revolution "link-boys" stood ready to escort carriages and pedestrians home through dingy, badly-paved alleys.

Were it not for this fine regulative system derived from the Arabs, we might be in danger of assault from gangs (*garillas*) of ruffians (*rufianes*) and assassins (*asesinos*), who would at least make a great tumult or *alboroto* in the street.

#### CLOCKS AND WATCHES.

The world has benefited beyond calculation by the Arabic invention of these articles. It might almost be said that a revolution was brought about in social economy. One of the Roman pontiffs, Gerbert, who assumed the tiara under the name of Sylvester II., was a student at Cordova before the year 1000, and there learned the art of making watches, an accomplishment which placed him under suspicion of witchcraft.

The clocks and watches to be seen in Mexico in this generation are not from Morocco or Cordova, but from Massachusetts and Connecticut, localities which manufacture more of them in a month than were made under the Califate in one hundred years. The

<sup>1</sup> The cry of the mueddins (of Tangier) is precisely like that of the Spanish *serenos*, who must have learned it, as they did so many other things, from the Moors—a long chant on one note, sometimes shortened, sometimes prolonged." Margaret Thompson, *A Scamper through Spain and Tangier*, p. 278, New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1892.

arched market-places, the little stands heaped high with fruits and vegetables and guarded by crouching figures wrapped in *rebosas* and *serapes*, which distinguish the towns of Mexico might be inserted as pictures to illustrate volumes of travel in Northern Africa or the Levant.

And the book-venders who in those markets repeat aloud an outline of the plot of the dog-eared books and pamphlets they have to sell, are they not the improvisatori of Cordova, Seville, and Toledo, of whom we all have read so much?

And this party of professional serenaders, wandering from *zaguan* to *zaguan*, droning amatory ditties, and bearing the emblem of a ship ablaze with light, do they not replace the gay troubadours of Granada?

#### THE CUSTOM OF "PELON."

The stores, especially in the smaller towns, are Oriental in the hyperbole of their titles and the tenuity of their stocks. They are generally small and contracted and much behind the times. A very curious custom, that of *pelon*, obtains, by which after a certain amount of purchase the buyer receives a rebate or gratuity, either in money or goods. The word *pelon* means a stone or weight of some kind used to balance the crude scales in the country parts of Spain. The custom of *pelon* as it exists along the Rio Grande is analogous to that of *l'agniappe* in Louisiana.

#### BAKERIES.

The bakeries of Mexico are entitled to the grateful remembrance of every traveller, and the bread is of the best. The wheat is ground between stones in tiny mills whose wheels are turned by the water of *acequias*, much as in Andalusia and Murcia the grist was made ready for the Almanzors and Abdelmelics of centuries past.

The Arabian fashion of selling bread from trays carried through the streets of Jerusalem and other cities (see Gilman, "Story of the Saracens," p. 435, New York, 1887) is paralleled in most of the Mexican villages, and there is rather more than an accidental resemblance between the street cries of this part of the New World and those of the land of the Moslem. "In the name of the Prophet! Figs," is a cry no longer heard by Christian ears, and which has fallen back before the ear-piercing "*Algo de fruta! Algo de dulce!*" of the itinerant candy and fruit peddlers of Monclova, Celaya, Morelia, Queretaro, Laredo, and elsewhere.

The *caldero*, or wandering mender of brass pans and kettles, is another type of street-industry which may have come to Mexico from Cordova or Bagdad.

## BARBER-SHOPS.

The *peluquerías* or barber-shops of the larger towns recall, in their neatness and good taste, the great care bestowed by Arabs upon hair and beard.

## BATHS.

No Mexican municipality which can possibly provide baths for the people neglects that solemn duty. In many of the smaller towns, these are noticeably fine and well arranged. There is an absence of unnecessary ornamentation, but no material comfort is forgotten.

The baths are not free, the price being two cents for poor people, ranging from that up to *dos reales*, or twenty-five cents for the more affluent. For the smallest figure, one gets nothing but an abundance of clean, cold (or hot) water, and the tank to bathe in; for *dos reales* there are attendants at hand with towels, soap, brushes, mirrors, and anything else that may be needed; economy in varying degrees may be consulted in the intermediate prices.

San Miguel de Allende is perhaps as good a specimen of what a Mexican bath-house should be as can be found within the republic.

The attendants are very strict in preserving order and in seeing that each bather is provided with his own key and tank. One half the building is reserved for men, the other for women.

Not a drop of water is wasted. After leaving the bath-houses, it runs down the side of the hill into a line of stone troughs, alongside which patient *lavanderas* are washing clothes from morning until night; from the laundresses it runs down into larger pools, where the *casincas* or sheep shearers and dyers are sousing sheep, great hanks of woollen yarn, and piles of blankets. Farther down, it is contained in an *acequia* deeply shaded by orange, lemon, banana, pecan, pomegranate, rose, willow, and oleander; next it courses through one of the streets, to keep it refreshed and free from dust, and finally meanders across the prolific fields beyond the town.

That the Mexican has derived his bath from the Roman, language tells most plainly. Everything connected with the bath is designated by a Latin derivative. The Arabs found the bath most highly developed in Syria, Palestine, North Africa, and Spain, and quietly adopted it. They became as passionately addicted to its use as Romans and Greeks had been, and in their earliest chronicles accuse their Christian enemies of an indifference to its benefits. "It is related of these people of Galicia, who are all Christians, that they are the bravest of all the land of Afranc, but they live like savages or wild beasts; they never wash their persons or their garments, nor do they change the latter until they fall in pieces from their

limbs, a mere heap of rags and tatters.”<sup>1</sup> (Condé, “Dom. Arabs in Spain,” vol. i. p. 203, quoting an Arabic authority, temp. Abdu-rahman I., circa 800 A. D.)

The observation of the Mahomedans at that epoch had probably been restricted to war parties of Christians, poorly provided, in the Asturian Mountains; in the course of several centuries it is related that the Moorish king, Ismail of Granada, A. D. 1316, “commanded that the Christians should wear marks on their clothing whereby they might be distinguished from the Moslemah, and laid on them an impost for their dwellings and baths which they had not previously paid.” (Condé, iii. p. 226.)

Coppée unfairly accuses the Spaniards of destroying the baths of the Moors, because the religion of the Spaniards was largely a religion of personal uncleanness. This matter is rather too delicate for discussion here, but certainly the monks of Spain were no more untidy than the fakirs and morabith of the Arab-Moor. Some other reason must be assigned for their suppression. They naturally would become and undoubtedly were places of political assignation, and the following from Stirling-Maxwell bears out this conclusion. In 1518, this eminent author says, “The Moriscoes were commanded to lay aside their ancient language and customs: to speak Castilian and dress like Spaniards; to give up bathing and destroy their baths; to keep the doors of their houses open on Saturdays and feast days; to renounce their national songs, dances, and marriage ceremonies; to lay down their Arabic names, and to entertain among them no Moors from Barbary, whether slaves or freemen.” (Stirling-Maxwell, “Life of Don John of Austria,” vol. i. pp. 118, 119.) He also says that they constantly entertained pirates from Barbary and aided them in assaults upon Christian commerce. The dress of the pirates of Barbary being exactly the same as that of the Moors, it was difficult to detect them, and many Christians were kidnapped.

Having said that the Moor found the bath much as the Roman left it, it is easy to show that through the Spaniard he bequeathed it to the Mexican with little if any change, as suggested by language.

#### AMUSEMENTS.

What are the amusements, diversions, entertainments, religious or secular, of the Mexicans? What great religious festivals are observed at the mutations of the seasons? By observing closely

<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the Russian moujiks, Edna Dean Proctor says that their clothes “are worn without washing, night and day for months, and perhaps years, until they become rags and are exchanged for new.” *A Russian Journey*, p. 52, Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

such matters, in which mankind is most eminently conservative, would it not be possible to pick up here and there a shred of some long-forgotten wardrobe? The task is at least worth the effort. An examination should be made into those amusements which are public and those entertainments which are more restricted in character, such as christenings, weddings, funerals, balls, and all functions which for any reason draw together the friends of a family.

The Mexican is endowed with a great fund of good common-sense. He does not believe in the cheerless existence of his Yankee brother who works himself to death or decrepitude before he is forty, and he will not follow such an example. Therefore, as a matter of duty, he devotes a portion of his life to rational enjoyment, and as a consequence neurasthenia is a disease unknown in Mexico, and one whose character it would be difficult to make a Mexican understand.

Scarcely a town in the republic is so poor or so small that it has not its *alameda* or its public garden, with its winding paths or rambles (*rambla*, Arabic), in which twice a week one can listen to fairly good music, and witness the promenade of sedate men who march leisurely, arm in arm, two by two, in one direction, while *señoras* and *señoritas*, equally sedate, march with equal leisure in the opposite.

Once a week there is a performance, generally by local talent, in the *teatro*. The Mexican theatre, or the Spanish theatre, its parent, is a subject too vast for any such treatment as can be given here.

The prologue to a Spanish drama is called the *loa*, a word meaning praise or eulogy. This refers to the flattering phrases addressed by the leading actor, in minor affairs by the clown, who is known by the name of *payaso*, to the audience. It is a *sine qua non* in the Mexican rustic representations.

In Burgos in Spain "the prompter is protected by a sort of tin shell arched like the roof of an oven, to protect him against the *patatas*, *manzanas*, and *cáscaras de naranja*, potatoes, apples, and orange-peel, with which the Spanish public — as impatient a public as ever existed — never fails to bombard those actors who displease them. . . . The actors did not know a word of their parts, and the prompter spoke so loudly that he completely drowned their voices." (Théophile Gautier, "Wanderings in Spain," p. 42, London, 1853.) Every word of the above applies to the Rio Grande. The miracle-play, still maintained in Mexico, has been mentioned in a previous paper.

Other public diversions of the Mexican frontier are *marromas*, or tight-rope walking, with acrobatic feats, *matachines*, harlequins, and *títeres*, or puppet-shows. They are too much like exhibitions of the same kind in other parts of the world to need description.

GAMBLING.

The Mexican, of whatever degree, has a natural fondness for gambling. All the elements which united to form the Mexican social structure, — American Indian, Arab, or Teuton, — were addicted to the same vice. The favorite games are monte, of two kinds, *con quien*, roulette, *chusas*, keno, chess, dominoes, and some others. For the monte game, the terms employed do not appear to be Latin. Thus the cards themselves are called *naipes*, to shuffle is *barajar*, the knave is *sota*, the ace is *as*, and to cut is *alce*. *Ajedrez*, chess, is an Arabic word. "King Hixem played, as usual, his game of chess." (Condé, vol. i. pp. 239, 276.)

No Mexican house on the Rio Grande is complete without its *oráculo* or dream-book, and the women are as devoted to chiromancy or palmistry as the Arabs were in Cordova. (See Coppée, vol. ii. p. 442.) The fourth council of Toledo (A. D. 633) punished with deposition any priest who consulted soothsayers. "Que sea depuesto de su honor el eclesiástico que consulte á agoreros ó supersticiosos." (Padre Florez, "España Sagrada," vol. vi. p. 164.)

CORRER EL GALLO.

Chicken fighting is freely indulged in by the Mexicans, as it was by the Arabs, but it was probably played by Romans and Carthaginians in Spain long before the Arabs landed; therefore not much stress need be laid upon its existence. The Romans caused to fight both chickens and quails.

There is another form of diversion with fowl which must, however, be mentioned, although it too, in one shape or another, has spread over much of the surface of the earth, and that is the great sport of *correr el gallo*, or "running the rooster," which strictly speaking is more frequently an old hen. The victim selected is buried up to its neck in sand, and then horsemen dash at full speed up to the chicken, lean out from the saddle and try to grasp it. There are many failures, involving ludicrous mishaps and perilous tumbles, but finally some rider, bolder or more dextrous than his comrades, seizes the hen by the neck and gallops down the valley, followed by all the other contestants. The hen is usually torn to pieces in the struggle. This was the method observed at the Indian pueblo of Santo Domingo, New Mexico, in the month of August, after harvest, in 1881. ("Snake-Dance of the Moquis," Bourke, London and New York, 1884.)

In the lower Rio Grande, on St. John's Day (June), the young men engage in *correr el gallo*, but instead of a living bird make use

of an image of paper, ribbon, and feathers. In both cases the riding is superb, and there are not a few accidents.<sup>1</sup>

#### BAILES AND TERTULIAS.

When a dancing party is decided upon in a Mexican village, the affair takes shape by a sort of spontaneous generation. The young men display an activity not usual with them and busy themselves in putting the selected room to rights. There is not very much to be done, and yet there is always something. The musicians must be notified, the earthen floor must be wet down, tallow candles are needed in the tin sconces attached to the walls, the saints' pictures require dusting, rawhide-seated chairs are to be borrowed, two and three from this neighbor and two and three from that, and then everybody has to be invited. In the really good old times, this was done by a *pregonero*, or crier, who bawled the welcome notice through the streets; later on, when society began to divide up into classes, the select few were called upon by some of the self-appointed committee of young men having the *funcion* in charge; but in these days of degeneracy there are few villages along the border which do not aspire to printed forms of invitation. But the Mexican *baile* is not what it used to be twenty-five or thirty years ago. Board floors and kerosene-lamps, cottage-organs, ready-made gowns, and hand-me-down suits have wrought destruction upon its erewhile beauties and knocked all the poetry out of it,

The dancing would begin very soon after dark and last until all hours of the next morning. The young ladies were not escorted from their homes by gentlemen, but came under the guardianship of aged female relatives or attendants, called *dueñas*, and the older, uglier, and more crabbed a *dueña* happened to be the more highly was her efficiency regarded. The *dueña* possibly was known to the Romans; she certainly was known to the Arab-Moors in Spain, who allowed their women a freedom entirely distinct from the seclusion enforced in other sections of the Mahomedan world.

With the arrival of the young men the fun began. Scarcely had a gallant put his foot across the threshold before some young lady would assail him with a *cascaron*. To make the *cascaron* (lit. egg-shells) an egg is carefully blown of its meat and then filled with cologne, or essence of musk, or finely chopped gold and silver tissue paper. The aperture is then sealed up, the egg-shell decorated, and

<sup>1</sup> *Correr el gallo* seems to be the same, or of the same general nature, as the French *jeu du canard*, in which a duck, head downward, is suspended from a rope or a limb of a tree, and a blindfolded boy tries to cut off its head with a sabre. See *A Tour through the Pyrennees*, Hyppolite Adolphe Taine, Fiske's translation, pp. 92, 93, New York, Holt & Co., 1874.

the *cascarón* is ready for business. A lady takes one and approaching a cavalier breaks it on his head, rubbing the pieces well into his hair. The etiquette of the border requires the swain to provide himself with a *cascarón* (there is a table loaded with them in one corner), and to return the compliment in kind, being careful not to rub the fragments too deep into the lady's tresses, as they are not easy to get out. Then he is expected to lead her out upon the floor and dance with her. The dance ended, he escorts her to a table upon which are refreshments of different kinds, syrups, and *dulces*. The *señorita* very generally helps herself to a portion of fruit, cakes, or *pasas* (raisins of the country), and puts it away in a large handkerchief to be carried home when the entertainment is over.

There may be many means of determining who has been the belle of some particular ball, but there has never been a surer indication than the size of the bundle the Rio Grande girl had to carry home a generation ago.

In England, as late as 1677, it was the custom for guests at christenings to carry home what they could not eat. (See Brand, "Pop. Antiq.," vol. ii. p. 80, article "Christening," London, 1872.)

The origin of the *cascarón* is obscure; in the light of evidence now available it would be going too far to say that it was Arabic, and yet only in that direction can any trace of its paternity be found.

At the marriage of Molmun, son of Haroun al Raschid, which occurred at Wasit, a suburb of Bagdad, about 825 A. D., we read that "balls of amber or musk were thrown among the attendant throngs. . . . Coins of gold and silver, and *eggs of amber* were also lavishly cast about to be picked up by whoever would." (Arthur Gilman, "The Story of the Saracens," p. 303, New York, 1887.)

The Mahomedans in Spain are reported to have had two, some say four festivals corresponding to Easter. There was certainly one, the *Alfitra*, at close of the Ramazan, and another, that of the Victims. "During both these solemnities, profane and worldly follies had been permitted to creep in—the people going about the streets like madmen, casting oranges and other fruits at each other, and every one besprinkling his neighbor with odorous waters." (Condé, "Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. iii. p. 263.) These "disorders" were suppressed by Jusef in A. D. 1343.

There are no formal presentations at these Mexican parties because none are needed; each guest knows his neighbor. Considerable liberty of action is conceded, and all who so desire, men or women, smoke, and there is much gossip and abuse of the neighbors who are absent, and sometimes much *carcajada* or noisy laughter (an Arabic word). Mexican courtesy attracts the respectful attention of every observer. It is not put on as a garment to be worn at



balls and on occasions of ceremony, but is ever present, and has become as it were a second nature. Mexicans, in meeting, embrace each other as the Moors and Arabs do. The proudest gentleman in the land will take off his hat to return the salutation of the beggar who begs a light for his *cigarrito*, or will beg his pardon in the name of God when declining his supplication for charity.

#### CHRISTENINGS.

The Mexican *comadre* or gossip appears to the best advantage when a new baby is to be admitted into the fold of the church. The party having returned from the sanctuary, the house is thrown open to friends, there are music, conversation, and dancing, with refreshments to which all are made welcome, even the beggars on the streets.

Condé remarks that *hacer buenas fadas* was the phrase used to express the festival always held on giving a child its name, which was done on the eighth day after its birth. . . . "A part of the food prepared for the occasion was then given to the poor." (Condé, "Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. i. p. 478.)

It should be borne in mind that *name*-days not *birth*-days, are celebrated along the Rio Grande; invitations are extended for celebrations on the day of the saint whose name is borne by the host; and thus it often happens that on the same evening one may have the opportunity to enjoy the hospitality of several Juans, Anitas, or Guadalupe, as the case may be. The greatest term of endearment that can be given to a neighbor is *tocallo*, namesake. When the infant son of Abdur-r-rhman I. received the name of Hixem, "that auspicious event was celebrated with many rejoicings, the king Abdur-r-rhman dispensing alms very liberally and giving food to the poor in adundance." (Condé, vol. i. p. 182.)

#### COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

Of the customs connected with courtship and weddings among the Mexicans much of a most interesting nature might be written. In an outline description of this nature nothing more than a reference to salient features is permissible. The relations between the sexes being under strict surveillance among the Mexicans, young men and women have not the same opportunities for becoming acquainted as have been found of advantage in the United States.

A *jóven* who feels the first impulses of the tender passion has few if any opportunities for meeting the object of his affections alone, much less of conversing with her save in the presence of parent or grim *dueña*.

He may dance with her at parties, speak to her at christening,

kneel near her at mass or vespers, perhaps enjoy the bliss of sprinkling her with holy water, but his chief pleasure or his chief misery, as one may choose to regard such matters, is to be found in "playing the bear" (*jugando el oso*, or *oseando*, as the term goes). The unfortunate young man takes station close to the lattice of the young *señorita*, and there remains until by accident she approaches and looks down upon him, and by accident drops a flower or a handkerchief, — accidents of this kind are constantly happening in the best Mexican families, — and then, animated by hope, he may venture to send some female relative to sound the girl's parents as to their disposition.

Among the rural Mexicans who adhere most obstinately to old usages, a betrothal is an affair of some formality. The aspirant makes evident the sincerity of his declaration by the tender of the *dones*, presents of some value, generally jewelry, which, if accepted, give him the right to walk with the young lady and her family to church and places of entertainment.

As the wedding day approaches, he buys the trousseau for the bride. This custom is now dying out in all but the remote Mexican districts, yet it is still noted in Cuba.

The parents of the bride generally provide a dowry and arrange a wedding-feast which is as elaborate and bountiful as their means will permit, and liquor in abundance may always be looked for. The entertainment is most frequently held out of doors, the climate favoring such a course, but the wedding itself, when possible, must be held in the church. At the words in the ritual, "with all my worldly goods," the bridegroom casts thirteen pieces of money upon a plate held by one of the officiating priest's assistants. This money is blessed by the celebrant, and restored to the donor, who replaces it with its equivalent in coin of the realm and has the original pieces made into a *pulsera* or bracelet for his bride. This custom, known as the *arras*, is explained by local wiseacres to represent our Saviour and the twelve apostles, but what our Saviour and the twelve apostles, including Judas, have to do with a Mexican wedding would be hard to say.

On the contrary, the ceremony is a Moorish one, and the name *arras* itself is Moorish, given by Eguilaz y Yanguas in "Glosario," with a definition sustaining the above description.

At a very elegant wedding in Laredo, Texas, the bride sent for all the gentlemen present and graciously conferred upon each one a rosebud from the bouquet which she had carried to the altar.

At another, in Saltillo, although the bridal couple and their immediate attendants returned home in carriages, the spectators streamed in procession on foot to the bride's house, where they were met by

an orchestra, and in a few minutes afterwards by a procession of servants bearing platters in each of which was a roasted chicken or duck, whose head had been replaced and gilded with an effect decidedly barbaric and magnificent.

To compare all the above with Arabic or Moorish ceremonials, extracts can be taken from excellent authorities; thus, Condé says that at the marriage of Abdelmelic and Habiba, A. D. 989, "the wedding festival was held in the beautiful gardens of the Almunia." ("Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. ii. p. 13.)

A recent writer in "All the Year Round," describing a wedding among the Kabyles of North Africa, has this to tell. The bride "is led to the bridegroom to the accompaniment of more tambor music. He opens the door, takes her by the hand, makes her sit by him on the cushions, after which he lifts her veil, and for the first time looks upon his wife's face. The lady says not a word to her husband until he has made her a present, either of jewelry or gold pieces. The next day there is a great deal of fritter-making in the new establishment, for distribution among the various friends and relatives on both sides."

The writer in commenting upon his own description adds: "Here it is the girl's father who exacts a wedding portion."

Thus far there has been demonstrated a surprising similarity in the existence of customs like the *arras*, wedding festivities out of doors, and the eating of fritters corresponding to the *buñuelos* mentioned in foregoing pages. Among the "Arabs the marriage contract might be only verbal; but the better classes confirmed it before the kadi, and for them the ceremonies of betrothal and espousal were elaborate and splendid." (Coppée, "Hist. Conq. Spain," vol. ii. p. 331.)

That wine flowed as freely at the weddings of the Arab-Moors in Spain as it does in those of the wealthy Mexicans of to-day is beyond question.

That curious system, "marriage by capture," prevailed in almost all primitive society, as may be learned by an examination of McLennon's "Primitive Marriage." It certainly prevailed among the Arabians of early times. Gilman says that "the ferocious custom of burying female offspring alive as soon as born was followed, either as considering women not worth bringing up, or from an exaggerated sense of honor, as though fearing that the helpless ones might some day be carried off by an enemy" (Arthur Gilman, "The Story of the Saracens," p. 63, New York, Putnams, 1887), while Condé, describing the marriage of Abdelmelic and Habiba, refers to "the feigned defence made by the damsels" composing the retinue of the bride. ("Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. ii. p. 13.) He also speaks

of the "delightful music which sounded through the night." (Idem, vol. ii. p. 13.)

A suggestion of this form of wife-capture could be found among the Mexicans less than a generation ago, in the city of Tucson, Arizona.

On Saint John's Day, or more strictly on the night of that day, the young bucks of the city and vicinity, dressed in their best, and mounted upon prancing plugs gayly caparisoned, rode up to the doors of their dulcineas, where those blushing *señoritas* in their finest raiment awaited the great honor of being lifted up on the pommel of the saddle, where, firmly encircled by one stout arm of their cavaliers, they enjoyed the eagerly sought privilege conceded for that occasion only of riding up and down the streets unattended in the company of a man.

As it happened, there were not enough girls or not enough horses to go around, and some of the gay cavaliers had to enjoy themselves as best they might on foot, and this they did by throwing firecrackers at the horses of their luckier rivals as the latter, holding their gentle burdens, cantered up and down the streets. Why there were no necks or limbs broken will always remain one of those mysteries for which no solution can be offered.

This knowledge of and love for fireworks and illuminations was duly transmitted to Mexico and the Mexicans, and may be seen reflected in the civic and religious celebrations of all the cities and towns from the Rio Nueces to Tehuantepec.

Still another observance connected with St. John's Day on the lower Rio Grande is that of taking a bath in the stream and putting on new clothes. Here is something closely akin to the ceremonial ablutions enjoined by the Prophet upon his followers.

#### MORTUARY CEREMONIES.

When little children died among the Mexicans, the body neatly dressed in white, with a helmet of gilt paper, or else with a garland of artificial flowers, was laid upon a board, or upon a temporary bier, and borne to the church and thence to the grave by surviving comrades, preceded by musicians playing waltzes or soft, sad music.

Grown people were buried in much the same manner. The corpse was not preceded by music, but it was laid upon a rude bier, clad in its best apparel. Wood was extremely dear, and coffins were within reach of only the very wealthy. The object seemed to be so to hurry matters that the remains might be interred within less than twenty-four hours after decease. The male mourners, wearing above their elbows tiny bows of black crape, marched two and two, each bearing a candle which was lit as the procession entered the church. The

women, also two by two, and bearing candles, followed after the men, but their candles remained unlit. The evening after the funeral they would meet in some designated house, light their candles, and talk about the defunct and his virtues until the candles burned away. On ranches at a distance from towns, rockets were sent up, to warn the neighbors that the funeral was about to start, to ward off evil influences, or for both purposes.

These mortuary ceremonies of the Mexicans, with only slight allowance for time and distance, are found among the Moors to-day. Speaking of the Moors of Tangiers, Miss Margaret Thompson says: "They carry their dead to the grave with a triumphant march, chanting all the way a joyous air. The bodies are buried without coffins, wrapped in linen." ("A Scamper through Spain and Tangiers," p. 265, New York, 1892.)

Condé, when treating of the funerals of the Arabs in the first centuries after their arrival in Spain, never mentions coffins, but always speaks of the dead being carried on biers. The Spanish word for coffin is the Arabic *ataúd*, but that meant the plank on which the corpse was carried. When he speaks of Christian funerals he always mentions coffins. After the Moors had mingled with their former foemen, and become their vassals, references will be found to their use of coffins and caskets.

#### CUSTOMS IN CHURCHES.

Upon first entering a Mexican church, an American accustomed to the comfortably, gayly dressed congregations of women of his own section will be impressed by the absence of pews or seats of any kind, and by the numbers of women who, closely wrapped in black *rebosos* or *tapalos*, kneel on the floor of earth and cough incessantly during the service.

This uniform method of covering the heads and shoulders is Moorish: "No maiden went to a mosque where there was not a place set apart for the virgins; and every woman was carefully wrapped up and covered with her veil." (Condé, "Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. ii. p. 3, footnote.)

This custom became a matter of obligation under King Juzef, who in A. D. 1343, ordered that when women entered mosques "all were to be carefully veiled." (Condé, vol. iii. p. 262.) To enter a church unveiled signified, during Moorish times, that a woman was a Christian. Such an act led to the detection of two young Moorish girls, Sabagotha and Liliosa, who had secretly become Christians (A. D. 852). (Padre Florez, "España Sagrada," vol. x. p. 381.)

"The men very frequently, when impelled by an excess of devotion, will pray stretched at full length, or bent low to the floor, or with

arms extended in form of a cross. This method of "prayer with prostrations" is mentioned by Condé, vol. ii. p. 63, and again in vol. iii. p. 272, where he calls it *anata*. At the doors of Mexican churches, in the republic of Mexico itself, are still to be found venders of wax tapers and small candles which are purchased by the pious and burned in front of the altars, sometimes held by the devout suppliant, sometimes placed upon the altar itself.

This practice was prevalent in Moorish Spain, where we read of a youth "whose father was a lamplighter, or *burner of tapers* at the shrines of saints in the great Aljama."<sup>1</sup> (Coppée, "History of the Conq. of Spain by the Arab-Moors," vol. ii. p. 229.) As is well known, there is sacred dancing in the Cathedral of Seville, tolerated by the Papal authorities, on the feasts of the Immaculate Conception, Corpus Christi, and the last three days of the carnival. The ten dancers wear costumes of the time of Philip II., and move to the sound of castanets. In the time of Philip II., the Moors were still a potent social element in and around Seville, the castanet was a Moorish instrument of music, or at least they inherited it from Carthaginians and Romans, and the feasts mentioned were as much Moorish as they were Christian.

No dancing is held in any other church in Europe, Catholic or Protestant, or in any in America, so far as known, excepting in that of Madaleña, Sonora, Mexico, where as late as 1873 the Yagui Indians, then at peace with the Mexicans, executed a stately dance to the music of rattles on the feast-day of Saint Francis of Assisi, October 4. Dancing in churches was prohibited by third Council of Toledo (A. D. 589). "Que en las fiestas no se permitiesen danzas ni cantares torpes." (Padre Florez, "España Sagrada," vol. vi. p. 144.)

#### ALMSGIVING, FASTING, PILGRIMAGES, ABLUTIONS.

"Prayer, fasting, and alms are the religious duties of a Mussulman," according to Gibbon, in "Decline and Fall," chap. 50. To these he adds pilgrimages and ceremonial ablutions.

Condé tells the same story. Mahomed "commended the use of certain practices of ablution and purification, enjoining likewise daily prayers, almsgiving, and religious pilgrimages to the temple of Alharem." (Condé, vol. i. p. 34.) Had the same ordinances been given direct to the Mexicans, they could not be observed more strictly than they are at the present day. Of prayer enough has been said.

<sup>1</sup> Padre Florez mentions a Moorish prince, an ambassador to Queen Urraca, who knelt at the shrine of St. James of Compostella, with a wax taper (*cirio*) in hand to implore a cure for a tumor in his chest (A. D. 1122). (*España Sagrada*, vol. xix. p. 277.)

Of ceremonial ablutions it has been intimated that the annual lustration of the Mexicans in the Rio Grande on St. John's Day might be regarded as having such a character. Pilgrimages in Mexico are made with frequency to such shrines as Madaleña, the *chorro*, which is an old pagan place of worship, to Guadalupe, outside of the city of Mexico, where the Aztecs in prehistoric ages adored their goddess Tepeyac, to Agualeguas and many others.

To all these cities and towns, and to all others, such as Tucson, when celebrating their saint's day, flock scores of petty merchants, peddlers, buyers, sellers, tramps, cripples and beggars, confident of a satisfactory harvest. Certain exemptions and commercial privileges attached to these gatherings during the years of the Spanish viceroyal rule, and the custom would seem to have been inbred.

Alms were distributed by the Moslem on Fridays. (Condé, vol. ii. p. 134.) By the ordinances of King Juzef (A. D. 1243-1250) "the believers were enjoined to employ the leisure of that day (Friday) in visiting and relieving the poor." (Condé, vol. iii. p. 262.)

Friday, as is well understood, was the Mahomedan Sabbath. The beggars of Mexico do not restrict their importunities to any one day, but impartially distribute their favors, and at church doors, or *zaguanes* of private mansions, from Monday morning until Saturday night, whine their dolorous appeals for "a little alms for the love of God."

A Mexican may give in a number of different ways. There is the usual *limosnita* or alms to beggars, the *regalo* or ordinary present, the *recuerdo* or souvenir, the *dones* (pl. of *don*), gift made to affianced wife, *estrena* Christmas gift, *albricias* (Arabic), present made to bringer of glad tidings, *aguinaldo* or New Year's gift, a word which has been shown to be allied to the French *aguilanneuf* and to embody the cry of the Keltic Druids at opening of the new year, and *propina* much like our philopœna.

#### PENITENTES.

It might be well to say a word about the *penitentes*, or contrite sinners, who only a few years ago publicly whipped and otherwise mortified themselves in the streets of every village along the Rio Grande and throughout the republic. They were of the very same class as the *flagelantes* of Spain, and grew out of the same morbid and atonic spirituality which had surrounded the Moorish *santones* with the halo of godliness.

In the church of St. Ginés, in Madrid, in "the *bóveda* or dark vault, . . . during Lent, flagellants whip themselves, the sexton furnishing the cats; some have nine tails and are really stained with blood. In the good old times of Philip IV. Spaniards whipped them-

selves publicly in the streets." (Richard Ford, "Hand-Book of Spain," p. 79, London, 1882.)

Similar scenes have been enacted very recently in the old temple of Atotonilco, and one of the *disciplinas* there employed is now in the United States National Museum, Washington, D. C., and every army officer who served on the Rio Grande a quarter of a century ago can recall many remarkable incidents transpiring during Holy Week. The power of the church has been exercised remorselessly and in most of the villages effectually to stamp out this survival of savagery and barbarism. But from time to time they are again heard of and described. Within a few months, "Harper's Weekly" has published Mr. D. J. Flynn's illustrated description of those seen by him in Taos, New Mexico, at the head of the Rio Grande, which region, it may be noted, is a hotbed of penitente-ism. Another recent and lifelike article upon the same subject is from the pen of Charles F. Lummis.

Madame Calderon de la Barca describes those seen by her in the city of Mexico ("Life in Mexico," pp. 213, 214, London, 1843), and Colonel John Hay, in his "Castilian Days," speaks of them as still existing in the outlying districts of Spain.<sup>1</sup>

#### PHRASES AND CATCHWORDS.

From prayers in churches to prayers, ejaculations, and oaths in conversation is an easy transition. The most ordinary prayer of

<sup>1</sup> Flagellants. — M. l'Abbé Boileau, Docteur de la Sorbonne, in his *l'Histoire des Flagellants*, 2d. ed., Amsterdam, 1732, says that flagellation found no authority for its existence in either the Old or New Testament, or in Patristic teachings, unless as a punishment duly inflicted upon conviction for adultery, fornication, larceny, or such offences.

The early Christians observed with honor the recklessness with which the Romans beat their slaves, and recoiled with disgust from the voluntary flagellations of the Lupercalia. From the time of St. Augustine, the lash was administered to heretics and criminals.

There was no voluntary flagellation among the anchorites of the East. About the year A. D. 1000, when the idea first began to take shape that the end of the world was approaching, flagellants began to appear, and in 1047 or 1056 they assumed an organization largely because their cause had been espoused by S. Peter Damien, although no less an authority than Bruno, the grim Carthusian, fought them with might and main.

These Flagellants were condemned by the Church, and almost suppressed, but with the outbreak of the plague in the thirteenth century there was a recrudescence of this fanatical idiocy which perpetuated it until the agitation of the Reformation gave the ecclesiastical authorities more important matters to think about. The parliament of Paris formally interdicted the Flagellants in 1601. During the years of the plague, droves of Flagellants, numbering hundreds, marched through Germany, Italy, and France, halting but one night in each village, and scourging themselves three times a day.



Mexican life is one of Moorish origin, *Ojalá!* or Would to God! that is to say, Would to Allah! The original of this is said to have been: *en schâ allah*, if God would. (G. Körting, Lat.-röm. Wört., 1891.)

Recognizing this as having been in its origin a prayer, and realizing that in the expressions, *Ojalá que sea!* and *Ojalá que fuere!* (Would to God it may be! and Would to God it might be!) it is constantly on the lips of Mexican men and women, it is not too much to assert that within the territorial limits of the United States to-day, in the ratio of population, more prayers ascend to the prophet of the Moslem than are offered to Jesus Christ.

This pious "God knows how that may be!" of the Arabic chroniclers is literally translated into the Mexican *Dios solo sabe!*

#### PROVERBS AND REFRAINS.

The dignified sedateness of Mexican conversation is spiced and enlivened by an Attic salt of bright, pungent, and philosophical *refrains* not a few of which seem to have a distinctly Moorish flavor, but a full treatment of this part of the subject would fill a volume by itself.

"But, besides the lexical tributes, we must include the forms of thought and modes of proverbial expression of which the Spanish is full and which are the vehicle of 'the wit and wisdom' of Don Quixote. The traveller in Spain, as he listens to the proverbs, in the mouth of every peasant, seems transplanted to the land and period of the Arabian Nights." (Coppée, "Hist. Conq. Spain," vol. ii. p. 344.)

#### SUPERSTITIONS.

An attempt at an outline description of the popular superstitions and folk-medicine of the Mexican population of the Rio Grande Valley was published about one year ago in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*. At the present time nothing will be done beyond indicating wherein certain of those superstitions had their analogues among the Arab-Moors. Mahomed was a firm believer in the evil eye. (See Gilman, "Story of the Saracens," p. 166.)

During thunder-storms it was narrated that sand was thrown in the air to avert bad luck. At his first battle with the people of Medina, "the prophet (Mahomed) started from his throne, mounted his horse, and cast a handful of sand into the air." (Gibbon, "Decline and Fall," chap. 50. See, also, "Medicine Men of the Apache," Bourke.)

The dread of the *bruja* or witch indicates the fear which the Arab had of the same class of malefactors.

The Mexican fear of cross-eyed or one-eyed men may embalm a vague tradition of the conquest of Spain by Tarik el Tuerto (Tarik

the *one-eyed* or twisted-eyed). Richard Ford mentions the Roman emperor Theodosius (a Spaniard by birth) and the great Moorish king Abdu-r-rahman as having also been *tuerto*.

King Juzef, in A. D. 1343, "forbade the circulation through the streets and markets of those who put up prayers for rain. . . . He commanded that when excess of drought or want of rain should appear to necessitate prayer, those who made that offering should go forth to the fields with much devotion and humility, entreating pardon many times for their sins, and uttering the following words with sincerity and cordial devotion." (Here follows a long prayer which, with appropriate modifications, could be recited to-day in Taos or Rio Grande city. (See Condé, vol. iii. pp. 263, 264.)

"The last two suras of the Koran . . . are written out and worn as amulets or committed to memory and repeated as charms." (Gilman, "The Story of the Saracens," p. 167, New York, 1887.)

This is done every day on the Rio Grande, substituting verses from the Bible, or prayers to saints for the suras.

The Arabs have a superstition that "prosperity is with sorrel horses." Mishkat-el-Masabreb II., quoted by Coppée, "Conq. of Spain by the Arab-Moors," vol. i. p. 8, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1881.

Compare with this the Mexican *refran*, —

Alazan tostádo,  
Antes muerto que consado.

The toasted sorrel [horse]  
Will fall dead before he 'll tire.

#### TREATMENT OF THE SICK.

The Mexicans are pronounced fatalists; few Mahomedans could excel them in that direction. If one of a family of children be taken down with the smallpox, the mother will put the others to bed with it, and if they also be stricken will resignedly murmur, "Dios lo quiere," God wills it. The Arab use of *hasheesh* (see "Alhaxix" and "Bange" in Eguilaz y Yanguas, "Glosario") is paralleled by the Mexican use of the *tolvatchi*, a plant also of the hemp family. *Tolvatchi*, it is said, can make people crazy, and there are some Mexicans who affect to believe that the unfortunate Carlota was *loco*'ed by having it administered to her in coffee. Some confidence in the remedial powers of United States Army surgeons has been developed in the minds of educated Mexicans during the past generation, but the ignorant masses still consult the *curanderas*, who are ostensibly herbalists, but in reality deal in all sorts of charms and trash.

Mexicans of this class place more reliance upon pilgrimages,  
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amulets, talismans, novenas, candles, and aids of this kind than in all the medicaments and all the physicians in the world.

#### MIRACLE WORKERS.

The Rio Grande is the land of the supernatural. The Mexican government has had its share of trouble in suppressing insurrections incited by religious enthusiasts. Only three years since, troops in solid battalions were sent to Tomasichi in the Sierra Madre on the line between Chihuahua and Sonora, to reduce to reason and obedience to law the untamed enthusiasts who rallied round a miracle-working "Santa Teresa."

The "San Pedro" of the town of Olmos, whose therapeutical antics were alluded to in "The American Congo," paid a visit to the highly refined and intellectual city of San Antonio, Texas, only last spring, and as the local papers stated was called upon by "thousands of people," while "letters and telegrams began pouring in upon him from all quarters."<sup>1</sup>

Such prophets, semi-prophets, and inspired healers correspond closely to the Mahdis who since A. D. 685 have arisen periodically among the Moslems; have under the name of the *almoravides* and *almohades* twice regenerated Spain, which was supposed to be growing lukewarm in the interests of Islam, and have within our own generation driven the English out of the Soudan. (See Condé, "Dom. Arabs in Spain," vol. ii. p. 354; Gilman, "Story of the Saracens," p. 414.)

#### LAWS AND REGULATIVE SYSTEM.

It is not to be expected that the regulative system of Mexico should preserve anything but the laws and decrees issuing from time to time from the Spanish crown direct, or intermediately through the viceroys.

The basis of this system should be sought for in the antique *fueros* in the "Siete Partidas," and the *recopilaciones*, inspired by the humane sentiments in the last will of Isabella the Catholic. Nevertheless, some few relics exist which speak plainly of the presence and influence of the Arab-Moor.

For example, the presiding judge in little Mexican communities is still designated by the Arabic name of *alcalde*, and his executive

<sup>1</sup> As these notes reach a conclusion, the press dispatches report the presence in Denver, Colorado of one Schlatter, a "divine healer" who has also been surrounded by thousands of devout admirers. Little did the projectors of the Union Pacific Railway imagine, thirty-five years ago, that special trains would in our day run over that superb highway of travel carrying the rich and credulous to be "healed" by such an impostor as Schlatter; but the world moves.

officer is called in some places the *alguazil*, in others the *xerife* (both Arabic names), and a man entering the court might do so in his shirt sleeves, but if he kept on his spurs he became liable to punishment for contempt, a reminiscence of the Arab idea of the necessity of taking off the shoes before entering a holy place.

Irrigation being essentially an Arab-Moorish introduction into Spain, there should be found traces of its parentage in the nomenclature and rules governing it. And this is so. Not only are the great irrigating ditches known as *acequias* and *zanjas* (Arabic words), but the officer in charge is called the *acequiador* or *zanjero*, and is clothed with peculiar powers. Whenever the ditches break, his rule is supreme and overrides that of *alcalde*, priest, or doctor; he can impose *corvées* of labor upon the population and make everything bend to his will. In the distribution of the water, he gives first to the oldest settler, without regard to the position of his fields along the line of the ditch. When farms and pasturage are subdivided, the Mexican rule is to have this so done that each *porcion* shall have free access to ditch or river, and on the Rio Grande there are such *porciones*, suitable principally for grazing, which are *fifteen miles deep*, with a frontage of one hundred *varas* or a little over 300 feet along the *acequia madre*.

Peonage, or slavery for debt, has only within the present generation been abolished in Mexico and the Mexican parts of the United States. The Mexican peon was not a slave in the English interpretation of the term; he had many privileges and full protection in most of his rights; was always treated with kindness, and corresponded fully to the Arabic *mauli* mentioned by Coppée, "Hist. Spain," vol. i. p. 63, and Stanley Lane-Poole, "Story of the Saracens," p. 48.

#### COMMERCE.

Among the Pueblo Indians of Arizona and New Mexico, the word for borax (used as a flux by their silversmiths) is *tinca*. This word came to them from the Moors through the Spaniards. It is a Thibetan word, and *tincal* is still an article of Thibetan export. (W. W. Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," pp. 272 and 339, New York, 1891, footnote.) It was used by Arab silversmiths, according to Eguilaz y Yanguas. These same Pueblo Indians learned the art of knitting from the Spaniards. The men do the knitting, just as they do in Spain and in Mahomedan countries to-day. In Leon, in Spain, "the men spin and the women delve." (Richard Ford, Hand-Book of Spain," vol. i. p. 201, London, 1882.)

Bayard Taylor saw Turkish men knitting in Phrygia, in Asia Minor. ("Lands of the Saracens," p. 282, New York, Putnams, 1873.)

*John G. Bourke.*

*Editor's Note.* — The printed form of this article never met the eyes of its author. The President of the American Folk-Lore Society died at Philadelphia, June 8, 1896. Of the irreparable loss which his departure will be to the Society, and of the grief which it will bring to many devoted friends, this is not the place to speak. The life and services of Captain Bourke will receive memorial mention in another part of the present number.